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## From the Christian Intelligencer THE EXCELLENCE OF THE PRESENT ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

In 1820 there was published at Glasgow a sermon with the title, "The excellence of the authorized version of the sacred Scriptures defended against the Socinians.—A sermon delivered at the Monthly Lecture in Gloucester-st. chapel, Oct. 18. 1820, by James Lister, Minister of Lime-street chapel." The latter part of it is directed against the Socinian improved (so called) version. The preceding part gives the history of the present version in common use, and vindicates its excellence, which as it may prove interesting and instructive, we extract.—CH. INT.

In discussing the subject, the preacher has adopted the following method:—

I. Give a history of the translations which preceded, and paved the way for our version.

II. State the manner in which the version itself was accomplished.

III. Subjoin the testimonies of some of the first scholars and critics to the excellence of our version.

IV. And examine briefly the claims of the improved version.

1. Let me detail the translations which paved the way for our present one, and which the translators used as helps in their great undertaking.

The first is the Septuagint, the oldest in the world, and the ground-work of all the translations which have followed. This is a translation into Greek of the Old Testament. It was made in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about two hundred and eighty years before Christ, and was for three hundred years generally venerated by the Christian churches. It is called the Septuagint because seventy-two interpreters are recorded to have been employed in the great work.

2. The Jewish Targums may be next mentioned. After the Babylonish captivity the purity of the Hebrew tongue was corrupted, and neighbouring dialects prevailed among the Jews. These Targums are paraphrases of the Hebrew text in the Chaldee; and, in many instances, both afford a clear light to the meaning of the Hebrew—and an unquestionable evidence of the ancient Jewish faith in the divinity and spiritual kingdom of the Messiah.

3. The Samaritan is next in order. This is a very servile copy of the Pentateuch, and by its singular deviations from it in some texts has excited much discussion among the learned.

4. Of all modern versions, the Syriac versions stand first. They were made, most probably, in an earlier part of the second century. There are two Syriac versions of the Old Testament, one made from the seventy, and one from the Hebrew original. The version of the New Testament has long been highly valued among scholars.

5. The Latin. In the first centuries, various Latin translations were made by private individuals for the western churches in Europe, as the Syriac had been made for the eastern world. But all these Latin versions were finally absorbed in the superior work of the learned Jerome, whose version altered and improved, and called the Vulgate, has long been the standard text among all the subjects of the Pope. It is from the Vulgate that the authorized Catholic versions are derived.

6. In a very early age, probably the seventh, an Ethiopic version was made. This was introduced into Egypt and Africa.

7. The Coptic. Dr. Wilkins refers it to the third century.

8. The Armenian. This embraces the whole sacred scriptures, and was made from the seventy in the fourth century.

9. There is an old Persian translation from the Seventy. There is also a version of the Gospels nearly 500 years old.

10. The Gothic Bishop Ulfilae rendered the sacred scriptures into Gothic in the fourth century, omitting the Kings and Chronicles, lest his barbarous countrymen should read the Jewish wars. Of this truly venerable version the four gospels remain.

11. The French. The most ancient in this language is one effected by Peter de Vaux, in 1160. He was esteemed a leading man among the Waldenses. Raoul made another in 1380. In 1535 Olivetan published another French version, and in 1550, a fourth was edited at Louvain. All these French versions preceded our authorized version, and were doubtless known to the translators.

12. The Italian. In 1471, Malermi published his; and in 1532, at Venice, Brucioli produced his. Our version being begun at 1604, these Italian ones preceded it.

13. The Spanish. The oldest mentioned is in 1500. The epistles and gospels were published in Spanish by Ambrose de Montem in 1512. The whole sacred scriptures were edited by Cassiodore de Reyna

in 1560. Driander dedicated his Spanish New Testament to Charles the Fifth in 1543. Besides these modern Spanish, the Jews had Spanish versions, of a very ancient date, in use among them.

14. The German. Before the reformation by Luther, there was a version of the sacred scriptures in German, printed at Nuremberg in 1447. But their superior translation by Luther, that wonderful man, soon threw the other into the shade. The fidelity, simplicity, and energy of Luther's version afforded a fine model for our translators to copy, while it supplied them with an exact comment on the meaning of the original. Luther's version was completed in 1531.

15. A Flemish version was published at Louvain in 1548. This was a catholic but a good one.

16. A Danish one formed on the model of Luther's came out in 1550.

17. A Swedish one in the same way appeared in 1534.

18. The Bohemian. Eight learned men engaged in this great undertaking, which was finished in 1599.

19. The Polish. A female, illustrious in rank, more illustrious by piety, had the honour of producing this version. Under her auspices, it came out in 1590.

20. Slavonian or ancient Russian appeared in 1581.

You may observe how all these versions were connected, how one suggested another, and prepared the way for another. Let me now direct you to the translations in our own tongue, which preceded our present version.

The venerable Bede who died in 785, translated the sacred scriptures into Saxon for the use of our rude German forefathers. Alfred the Great about a century after, followed the example of Bede. In 1571, Parker of Canterbury published an old Saxon version. John Wickliffe's version in 1380 is well known, and cannot be sufficiently praised, as the morning star which ushered in the bright day of the Reformation. William Tyndal's is the first which has the honour of being in modern English. He finished his second copy in 1530, and published it at the price of his own blood.

The Bible called *Matthew's* was printed in 1537.

Cranmer's Bible was seen in 1540 and 1562.

The Geneva translation made by our countrymen who were forced to reside there during the tyranny of Queen Mary, appeared in 1557 and 1560. On this version the highest encomiums have been passed by the first judges. The late Dr. Geddes gave it the loftiest character; and on this most excellent translation, our translators placed their eye in every step of their progress.

The *bishop's*. The notes and marginal readings of the Geneva bible not being pleasant to the high church party, Archbishop Parker took care to have another English version commonly called the *Bishop's* bible in 1608.

Last of all, our translators had before them an English version done by the catholics at Rheims in 1584.

The list of translations which I have now given will, I trust, be highly gratifying to every friend of the Bible Society, and will show the very great helps which our translators had in commencing their undertaking.

II. This leads me to the second particular proposed, namely a succinct account of our present version. King James ascended the throne in 1604. In 1604, the translation was begun. Fifty-four learned men, of the two universities were employed in it, and were divided into six classes.

Ten at Westminster translated from Genesis to I. Chronicles.

Seven at Westminster finished all the Epistles of the New Testament.

Eight at Cambridge rendered the Hagiographa of the Old Testament.

Seven at Cambridge prepared the Apocrypha.

Seven at Oxford translated the prophetic books.

Eight at Oxford undertook the Gospels, Acts, and Revelations.

The king prescribed certain rules to be carefully observed by the translators, of which I subjoin the following.

1. The *bishop's* bible, ordinarily read in the church, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.

2. The proper names to be retained as nearly as possible as they are vulgarly used.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as church, bishop &c.

4. Where any word hath diverse significations to be kept which is warranted by the most ancient fathers, which agrees with the scope of the place, and the analogy of faith.

6. No marginal notes to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew and Greek words which cannot without some circumspection be so fully and briefly explained in the text.

8. Every man of each company to take the same chapters, and having translated or amended them by himself, where he thinketh good, then all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their parts what shall stand.

9. As any one company hath despatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously.

10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ on any places, to send the others word thereof, to note the places, and there withal send their reasons: to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief person of each company at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to any learned man in the land for his judgment in such a place.

12. Letters to be sent by every bishop to each of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand, and to move and charge as many as being skilful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the companies at Oxford or Cambridge or Westminster.

14. The following translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the *Bishop's* bible—1st, Tyndal's.—2nd, *Matthew's*.—3d, Coverdale's.—4th, *Whitechurch's*.—5th, the Geneva.

15. Along with the fifty-four learned men,\* three or four of the most eminent and grave of the university divines should oversee the translations and see the above rules properly observed.

When the whole was finished, three copies of it, one from Oxford, one from Cambridge, and one from Westminster were sent to London, and two persons were chosen the joint companies to review and polish it. These daily met in Stationer's Hall for nine months till they had completed the task assigned them. Last of all, Bilson of Winchester and Dr. Miles Smith, who from the beginning had been very active in this affair, reviewed the whole, and prefixed the arguments to the several books.

In their own preface the translators have the following words. "We had before us the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New, nor were we the first who fell in hand with translating the Sacred Scriptures into English, and consequently destitute of former helps. The work has not been huddled up, but has cost the workmen the labour of nearly three years. Neither did we think it tedious to consult the translations or commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, or Latin, or the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch. Neither did we disdain to revise what we had done, and to bring back to the anvil what we had hammered." &c.

The lecturer then proceeds to that statement of two considerations, which throw a clear and steady light on the whole subject.

I. The time when our translation was completed, though two hundred years ago, was remarkable for classical and biblical learning. The classics from the capture of Constantinople, had been revised, and had been studied with enthusiastic ardour in all the countries of Europe. In the century immediately preceding our version, schools and colleges had been multiplied over all the western world. Manuscripts were explored, compared, and correct copies of the ancient authors, both profane and sacred were published with a zeal and patience far exceeding any thing observable in our time. Oriental literature, Hebrew, Chaldee Syriac, and Greek was deeply studied; and dictionaries, concordances, polyglots, such as the world had never seen before for the depth & variety of erudition, remain to this day as monuments of the talents, learning, and research of our ancestors. Exalted on these monuments, some of the puny scholars, in these latter days of great pretension, have taken their lofty stand, and affected to despise the very men by whom those monuments were reared. It is well known to the enlightened biblical scholar, that during the early part of the last century, the knowledge of Hebrew and all sacred literature was at a low ebb in this country, and that the revival of it cannot be dated back much later than fifty years. Let us beware then of putting the suggestions of modern critics on higher ground than the modest but solid claims of our ancestors.

2. To this I add another consideration, and then I finish this part of my subject; the time when our authorized version was completed was a time of awful contention between catholics and protestants; a contest in which whole nations were embarked to a man, arranged under their respective civil authorities. Every nerve was strained on both sides to obtain the ascendancy. Learning, talents, piety, and zeal rushed forth to the conflict. And the mighty field on which they met was "the translation of the sacred scriptures into the vulgar tongues."

In this fearful combat, England stood at the hand of the Protestant union; and both sides were fully aware of the incalculable consequences connected with an authorized version of the sacred scriptures into the English tongue. The catholics watched every measure of our government, and put every measure of our translation to the severest scrutiny. The Catholics had already sanctioned the Vulgate and were prepared to impugn every sentence wherein our version should differ from their authorized text. The mass of protestant learning was engaged on the one side to make our version as fair a copy as possible of the matchless originals; and the mass of popish erudition, on the other side, stood fully prepared to detect every mistake, and to expose without mercy every error of our public version.

Such then, were the circumstances of the period in which our version was made: and I leave you to judge of the weight which they throw into its scale.

III. The third part of my subject is to adduce the testimony of eminent biblical scholars in favour of our version.

In making a brief selection, I designed—

\* Forty-seven only were employed in the work of translation.

ly abstain from adducing the witness of such critics and commentators as are known to be hostile to new versions, and wedded even to the blemishes of our authorized translation. The selection is made from scholars, some of whom were engaged in new translations themselves, and who therefore were not interested in sustaining the merit of the common version; and whose concessions in favour of a translation in many respects different from their own, ought to have the greatest weight with the candid hearer.

My first is from the great *Selden*, whose authority is an host.—"The English translation is the best translation in the world, and renders the sense of the originals best. The translators took an excellent way. The part of the bible was given to him who was most skilled in a particular tongue. When they met together, one read the translation, and the next held in their hands some bible either in the original or in French, Spanish, Latin, &c. if they found any fault they spoke." *Selden* died in 1654.

2. At a grand committee for religion, under Oliver Cromwell in 1656, it was thought expedient to examine the present translations, to discover its mistakes, and, if needful, publish a better. *Lord Whitlock* of the treasury was ordered to superintend the business, and Dr. Walton, Dr. Cudworth, Mr. Clark, and other first scholars of the day were consulted about it. After many meetings and much consultation, the design was dropped, and the committee allowed that the public version was the best extant.

3. Dr. Walton, in the prolegomena to the polyglot, that English pyramid of sacred learning has the following confession. "The sacred oracles have been translated into almost all the European tongues in modern times. But among them all, the English version effected under the auspices of King James, stands pre-eminent."

4. To Dr. Walton may be added *Pool* in his *Synopsis Criticorum* 1669. "In the English version published in 1761, occur many specimens of an edition truly gigantic, of uncommon skill in the original tongues, of extraordinary critical acuteness and discrimination, which have been of great use to me very frequently in the most difficult texts."

5. Dr. Doddridge is well-known to have given a new translation in his family expositor. In his preface, he says, "there are so few places in which the general sense will appear different from our received translation, that some will perhaps think this an unnecessary trouble. But I can by no means repeat it, &c." And he proceeds to give his reasons for this course.

6. Mr. John Wesley in his preface to his New Testament makes the following concession: "The common English version is in general so far as I can judge, abundantly the best which I have seen."

7. Dr. Lowth in his short introduction to English grammar, 1763, says "the vulgar translation of the bible, is the best standard of our language." This serious testimony in the more valuable, as the writer possessed the most delicate taste in English composition, while known to be profoundly versed in the intricacies of Hebrew and biblical learning.

8. Dr. Durell in his critical remarks on Job. The Dr. was very fond of detecting the blemishes in our version, and contributed much in his day to the elucidation of dark passages in prophetic Hebrew. Yet after all he owns—the chief excellence of our English version consists in its being a closer translation than any which preceded. Without the affectation of sublimity or the charge of vulgarity it employs the language most proper for popular benefit. It has also observed a due medium between the scrupulosity of the puritans on the one side, and the obscurity of the catholics on the other, avoiding both the new turns of the former, and the obsolete words of the latter."

9. Dr. White, Laudin professor of Arabic at Oxford, in a sermon recommending the revival of our present version, says, "When the authorized version appeared, it contained nothing but what was pure in its representation of scriptural doctrine, nothing but what was animated in its expressions of devout affection. General fidelity to its original is hardly more its characteristic than sublimity in itself. The English language acquired new dignity by it; and has scarcely acquired additional purity since; it is still considered as the standard of our tongue. If a new version should ever be attempted the same turn of expression should doubtless be employed, for it is a style no less consecrated by custom than by its own native propriety."

10. I shall adduce the testimony of another student and scholar, to which much weight may be attached by some who hear me. Dr. Priestly in his preface to the English edition of his harmony of the evangelists, says, "I have corrected our common version, wherever I thought it necessary, either on account of its giving a wrong sense, or for the sake of changing some obsolete words and phrases. An entire new translation I thought necessary: and indeed it would not have been easy to make one, the general character of which would give more satisfaction, or more happily express the simplicity of the original writers of the gospel history." This is the deliberate judgment of Dr. Priestly about a new translation. Let our modern Socinians attentively consider it.

## EXERCISE OF THE LUNGS.

From Combe on Health and Mental Education

Judicious exercise of the lungs is one of the most efficacious means which we can employ for promoting their development and warding off their diseases. In this respect the organs of respiration closely resemble the muscles and all other organized parts. They are made to be used, and if they are left in habitual inactivity their strength and health are unavoidably impaired; while, if their exercise be ill-timed or excessive, disease will as certainly follow.

The lungs may be exercised indirectly by such kinds of bodily or muscular exertion as require quicker and deeper breathing; and directly by the employment of the voice in speaking, reading aloud, crying, or singing. In general, both ought to be conjoined. But where the chief object is to improve the lungs, those kinds which have a tendency to expand the chest, and call the organ of respiration into play, ought to be especially preferred. Rowing a boat, fencing, quills, shuttlecock, and the proper use of dumb-bells and gymnastics are of this description. All of them employ actively the muscles of the chest and trunk, and excite the lungs themselves to freer and fuller expansion. Climbing up hills, for the same reason, an exercise of high utility in giving tone and freedom to the pulmonary functions.

Where, either from hereditary predisposition or accidental causes, the chest is unusually weak, every effort should be made, from infancy upwards, to favour the growth and strength of the lungs by the habitual use of such of the above mentioned exercises as can most easily be practised. The earlier they are resorted to, and the more steadily they are pursued, the more certainly will their beneficial results be experienced. In their employment, the principles complained of in the chapter on the muscles ought to be adhered to.

Habitual exercise in a hilly country, and the frequent ascent of acclivities, especially in pursuit of an object, are well known to have a powerful effect in improving the wind and strengthening the lungs, which is just another way of saying that they increase the capacity of the chest, promote free circulation through the pulmonary vessels, and lead to the more complete oxygenation of the blood. Hence the vigorous appetite, the increased muscular power, and cheerfulness of mind so commonly felt by the invalid on his removal to the mountains are not to be wondered at. I was myself sensible of advantage from this kind of exercise during a Highland excursion. The necessity of frequent and deep inspirations, and the stimulus thus given to the general and pulmonary circulation, had an obvious effect in increasing the capacity of the lungs, and the power of bearing exertion without fatigue. Even when I was wearied, the fatigue went off much sooner than after a walk of equal length on a level road, and it was unattended with the languor which generally accompanied the latter. In fact, the most agreeable feeling which I experienced during the whole time was on resting after undergoing, in ascending a hill, a degree of exertion sufficient to accelerate the breathing, and bring out a considerable degree of perspiration. A lightness and activity of mind and freedom about the chest which I never felt to the same extent at any other time, followed such excursions, and made the fatigue comparatively light.

Before such practices, however, can be resorted to with advantage, or even with safety, there must be nothing in the shape of active disease existing. If there be, the adoption of such exercise will, in all probability, occasion the most serious injury. This also I experienced in my own case, as, for many months at an earlier stage of convalescence, going up a stair, ascending the most gentle acclivity, or speaking aloud for a few minutes, was equally fatiguing and hurtful, and often brought on cough, and occasionally a slight spitting of blood. At that time, riding on horseback, which exercises the body without hurrying the breathing, was especially useful. The advantage of these exercises in giving tone and capacity to the lungs, where debility rather than disease is complained of, is shown in their being regularly resorted to in preparing for the race-course and for the field. The true sportsman puts himself in training as well as his dog or his horse, and fits himself for the moors by regular excursions previous to the 12th of August. By so doing he improves his wind and increases his muscular strength to a remarkable extent in a very short time.

When no active pulmonary disease exists, these exercises may, with the best effects, be frequently carried so far as to induce free perspiration; only great care ought to be taken immediately after, to rub the surface of the body thoroughly dry, and to change the dress. It is quite ascertained, that with these precautions perspiration from exercise is the reverse of debilitating. It equalizes and gently stimulates the circulation, relieves the internal organs, improves digestion, and invigorates the skin. Jackson testifies strongly to these results when he declares that the severe exercise incurred in training not only improves the lungs, but always renders the skin "quite clear, even though formerly subject to eruptions." These assertions are, of course, to be received as the statements of a man partial to his own art; but they are in accordance with experience, and with the laws of the animal functions, so far as these are known. They therefore merit the consideration of professional men, and of those whose features are often disfigured by eruptions which they find it difficult to remove by any kind of medicine.

The late illustrious Cuvier is considered to have been saved from an early death by his appointment to a professorship leading him to the moderate and regular exercise of his lungs in teaching—a practice which soon removed the delicacy of chest to which he was subject, and enabled him to pass uninjured through a long life of active usefulness. Other examples of the same kind might be mentioned. But it is important to observe, that in all of them the exercise was, at all times, accurately proportioned to the existing state of the lungs. Had active disease existed, or the exertion required been beyond what the lungs were fully able to bear, the effect would have been, not to improve health, but to destroy life; and this condition of accurate relation between the amount of exercise and the state of the or-

I need hardly say, that when wishing to favour the development of the lungs, we ought to be scrupulous in avoiding such positions of the body as hinder their full expansion. Tailors, shoemakers, clerks at a writing desk, and the like, are unfavourably situated in this respect, as their bent position constrains the chest, and impedes the breathing and circulation.

Direct exercise of the lungs, in speaking, reciting, singing, and playing on wind instruments, is very influential for good or for evil, according as it is indulged in with or without due reference to the constitution of the individual. If it is, nothing tends more to expand and give tone and health to these important organs; but if either ill-timed or carried to excess, nothing can be more detrimental.

The crying and sobbing of children contribute as much to their future health, unless they are caused by disease, and carried to a very unusual extent. The loud laugh and noisy exclamations attending the sports of the young have an evident relation to the same beneficial end, and ought therefore to be encouraged instead of being repressed, as they are often sought to be, by those who, having forgotten that they themselves were once young, seek in childhood the gravity and decorum of more advanced age. I have already noticed, at page 109, an instance on a large scale, in which the inmates of an institution were, for the purpose of preserving their health, shut up within the limits of their hall for six months, and not allowed to indulge in any noisy and romping sports. The aim of the directors was undoubtedly the purest benevolence, but from their want of knowledge, their object was defeated, and the arrangement itself became the instrument of evil.

Beneficial as the direct exercise of the lungs is thus shown to be in strengthening the chest, its influence extends still further. If we examine the position of the lungs as represented in the figure on page 169, we shall see, that, when fully inflated, they must necessarily push downwards and flatten the moveable arch of the diaphragm D.D. by which they are separated from the belly or abdomen. This alteration, however, cannot take place without the diaphragm in its turn pushing down the liver, stomach, and bowels, which it accordingly does, causing them to project forwards and outwards. But no sooner are the lungs fully inflated than the contained air is again thrown out. The lungs diminish in size: the diaphragm rises, and with it all the contents of the abdomen return to their former position. The whole digestive apparatus is thus subjected to a continual pressure and change of place, and the stimulus thence arising is, in truth, essential to the healthy performance of the digestive functions, and is one of the means arranged by the Creator for the purpose. Consequently, if the lungs be rarely called into active exercise, not only do they suffer, but an important condition of digestion being withdrawn, the stomach and bowels also become weakened, and indigestion and costiveness make their appearance. I have already alluded to this subject in the chapter on muscular exercise; but the principle will now be better understood with the aid of the figure.

After this exposition, I need hardly say that the loud and distinct speaking enforced in many public schools is productive of much good to the young, and that in this respect the occasional songs in which all are required to join in the Infant Schools, and other institutions, are much to be commended. Let any one who doubts their efficacy as exercises of the lungs, attend to what passes in his own body on reading aloud a single paragraph, and he will find, not only that deep inspirations and full expirations are encouraged, but that a considerable impulse is communicated to the bowels, affording a marked contrast to the slight breathing and quiescent posture of those whose voices never rise above a whisper.

Reading aloud, public speaking, and lecturing are excellent exercises for developing the lungs and the chest. But as they require some exertion, they ought to be indulged in with prudence, and with constant reference to the constitution and health of the individual. When early resorted to, and steadily persevered in, they are useful in warding off disease and communicating strength to an important function. But when begun suddenly, and carried to excess by persons with weak lungs, they are more directly injurious than almost any other cause. It is not uncommon for young divines to give themselves up to preaching, without any previous preparation for the effort which it requires, and to experience, in consequence, pains in the chest, spitting of blood, and other dangerous forms of disease, which often extinguish their brightest prospects in the morning of life. Sacrifices of this kind are the more to be lamented, because it is probable, that, by a well planned system of gradual preparation, many who fall victims might find in their profession even a source of safety.

The late illustrious Cuvier is considered to have been saved from an early death by his appointment to a professorship leading him to the moderate and regular exercise of his lungs in teaching—a practice which soon removed the delicacy of chest to which he was subject, and enabled him to pass uninjured through a long life of active usefulness. Other examples of the same kind might be mentioned. But it is important to observe, that in all of them the exercise was, at all times, accurately proportioned to the existing state of the lungs. Had active disease existed, or the exertion required been beyond what the lungs were fully able to bear, the effect would have been, not to improve health, but to destroy life; and this condition of accurate relation between the amount of exercise and the state of the or-